

A. T. Parker  
High and Ashland East Side Sep06

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WILLIAM CHURCHMAN

(Continued on page Four)

that the way of the transgressor is hard  
and the end is not yet.

Reasoning people have long ago discarded the Bible as an authority upon any subject and this heresy is rapidly creeping into the church and seizing upon the minds of the young men. Very long ago a Dr. Craspey, of the Episcopal church was denounced as a heretic, tried and so adjudged by an ecclesiastical court of last resort, because he had dared to question the Bible doctrines, and now through a newspaper clipping sent to the Blade by W. H. Burnham, of Wisconsin, we learn that Bishop Charles D. Williams, of the Episcopal church, has written an address to the Young Men's Christian Association, at Detroit, told his hearers that the Bible was not God's word, and that he had never so taught it, but that he had been so trained. He was giving such doctrine. To consistent Bibles Williams should now be charged with

enthusiasm that will result in victory

when they all get up on the Last Day  
what d—d fools they'll look when  
they find that I'm not there!"

October 21st. Privilege of extension to  
November 21st. See Q. & C. ticket  
agents for particular.

# THE BLUE GRASS BLADE

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It is your move!

Some new subscribers would help.

The church has ever detracted from progress.

According to theology it must be either bliss or blisters.

Religion is full of thunderboxes, lightnings and bogus terrors.

For the Blade's success on its new venture we must depend on you.

Time was when the ministry was venerated, now it is a by-word and a reproach.

In the Secular world a protestant fraud is as bad as a Catholic humbug. Where's the difference?

So live that you can look any damned man in the face and tell him to go clean, plumb, to—er—Hell, ena.

Having got a glimpse of Roosevelt's big stick, of course Cuba is going to be good. She's got to that's all.

Theology believes in punishment on the installment plan but to cut off a dog's tail an inch at a time makes it no easier on the dog.

Most men assert they are free, yet they willingly become the most abject and pitiful slaves to the party lash and readily swallow the bolus.

God is eternal, declares the religionist, but after all he must share eternity with the slightest speck of dust swimming in a sunbeam. It, too, is eternal.

As an evidence that religion, especially the Christian brand, and business won't mix, we have yet to find a church deacon who could get a loan from a bank upon the unctuousity of his Amen.

The purists are making progress but slowly, for while they labor hard and long for the conservation of virtue they have neglected seeking for the causation of vice. Once found, the remedy is not far off.

If the laborer is ever to find political redemption in this land, or any other, he must cease allowing himself to be swayed through the heart instead of the head. He must use reason more and sentiment less.

The chief priests and Levites still worship at the shrine of Mammon and they give encouragement to the professional bank wreckers, protective tariff beneficiaries and the sworn enemies of labor. Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

We note the comment made by Higher Science in regard to our opinion concerning the Humanitarian Review upon the question of organization. To be candid The Blade did not believe the case was half as bad as it is made to appear.

Among the pulpiteres there are thousands possessed of such seldom brains that all they have to boast of could be successfully blown through a straw into the eye of a mosquito without even making the pestiferous little insect wink.

In spite of the fact that labor is cribbed, cabined and confined by the most unnatural conditions, it creates wealth every year to properly feed, clothe, educate and comfortably house very human being who stands beneath the shadow of our flag.

It is gratifying to note that while the American government has refused to admit the Chinese laborer, they have very properly placed his joss sticks

on a par with articles of religious worship pertaining to other systems. The Board of United States general appraisers at the Port of New York has ruled that joss sticks, being imported to this country from China, do not come under the head of "manufactured articles," and therefore subject to a duty of that class, but were designated as "incense" and therefore were "unenumerated." Thus the joss worshippers may play with his sticks without a heavy burden of taxation. And why should the Chinaman be taxed for his joss sticks when every church in the country is able to dodge the collector?

## HUMAN CONCEPTIONS OF SIN AND VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.

The Christian conception of sin, now engrafted upon our system of jurisprudence, is responsible for much misplaced energy and talent, and the prolific cause of a mistaken idea concerning its origin and treatment. This proposition was given a forcible demonstration in Lexington, Sunday was, when according to the news reports, Dean Capers of the Protestant Episcopal church is quoted as having said:

"Man's consciousness of sin is measured by the altars he has built, and this consciousness of sin demonstrates the necessity of the plan of redemption."

In the first place it is necessary that we should determine what is meant by the term, sin, and to what extent the human mind is influenced thereby. The Christian explanation is totally inadequate to admit of a rational attempt at elucidation for it brings sin into the world on one fell swoop whereas perfection and a total freedom from sin had previously existed. Christian theology teaches that originally, sin came into the world through Adam. That Adam was created perfect, in the image, or likeness of God. That Adam's sin consisted of simple disobedience in doing that which he had been forbidden to do by some superior power. That by reason of this disobedient act, sinfulness was transmitted to all underneath posterity, a curse placed upon the world, from which, an act of murder became a necessity in order to provide a method of redemption from that sin. At the same time, we are assured, that the same disobedient act also brought death into the world, a state which was, supposedly, previously unknown.

If we take up the thread of the argument at this point we are compelled to draw the conclusion that an act, to be a sin, must be original, that is, it must find its motive and volition in the individual committing that act. Philosophy has clearly demonstrated that motives are, in every case, the causes of volition and the will must always be as the strongest motive. God, having created sin, must, necessarily be sinful, or, being powerless to prevent sin, must surrender one of the principal attributes with which his votaries have clothed him. To condemn posterity for the sinful act of an ancient progenitor is clearly unjust and the Christian is bewildered, no matter from which point he approaches the question.

Discarding theology in such an inquiry and approaching it from a purely scientific basis, we find that sin, or crime, when reduced to its finest analysis, is that act upon the part of any organism towards another organism, which is injurious to that other from that other's point of view. In its broadest sense this definition is too vague to be of much value, for it opens up a wide and almost limitless field. On the other hand it does narrow the definition down so as to be more explicit, it must surely exclude some of the more lovely forms. From this understanding of sin has come that doctrine of self preservation which we are told was the first law of nature, and this, clearly, does not belong to man alone, but is the common property of all animals. It is also clear that primitive man could not make the distinction that we do between sin, crime and wrong-doing, or an act of war. These, combined, made up for him, the only kind of sin he knew of, and for each and all he avenged himself as best he could, according to the limits of his individual impulses.

With this understanding of sin, it seems impossible that any reasonably intelligent person could arrive at a state, or condition, of consciousness where in any plan or system, of redemption could arise that would be sufficient and exist outside of the individual. Vicarious atonement is foreign to law, natural or statutory. Forces that exist outside of, and beyond the individual cannot atone for individual sin. It is a fundamental law of nature that man feels the consequences of his own acts and such consequences are inevitable and he has to meet them himself. It may be a part of God's plan to punish the innocent for the guilty, but it is not in harmony with the best feelings of humanity and in this humanity revolts against the vicarious atonement and the Christian plan of redemption. Transcend a law of nature and nature inflicts her own punishment upon the transgressor, not upon another for him and permit him to escape. Violate any part of the statutory law and the judicial tribunals impose penalties upon the violator, not upon innocent persons. The Christian notion of regarding sin as wholly repugnant to every human feeling, a travesty on justice and a deliberate trampling upon the equitable application of human rights.

Did a person owe any financial obligation and another person volunteered to liquidate that obligation, the offered help being satisfactory to all persons interested, the obligation is discharged thereby and the debtor relieved. Did man commit crime and a thousand Christs should perish on the cross, the entire aggregation could not relieve him from the responsibility of his act, though they died for his sake. The punishment would, or might be, put upon another, but the moral responsibility would still attach to the person committing the crime.

It is in this that the Christian system is repugnant to reason, in violation of every known principle of human justice, and, as such it must be judged to be unsound, untrue and unworthy.

## OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN

Every Christian worshipper is called upon during his religious obligations, whether in the public church or in the privacy of the home, to repeat what is commonly designated as the Lord's Prayer, said to have been given by Jesus to the faithful of his flock. For centuries this prayer has been repeated by rote, not one in a thousand ever pausing long enough to consider the utter folly of it, and the meaningless phrases condensed into so much arant nonsense. It may be, after all, that the "fool" says in his heart, there is no god," but usually those who profess to know it all, goes and blabs it right out. Mens' acts deal altogether with the visible, but their foolish prayers relate only to the intangible. The first thing is to know what men do, the next and more important, is to know why they do it. We may mount the hill of Mizra, and from it view the tide of Time rushing over into the limitless sea, we may be able to comprehend something of the meaning of the mighty farce, tragedy that is being enacted on the bridge of Life, but we can never know why seemingly intelligent men will continue to waste their time and energies in foolish prayer.

Doubtless you have read the story of the Deserted Village. If you have you will doubtless remember that the talented author describes as being the most learned and intellectual of men, yet in that village he was a fool and a doctor, whose was put into many a discussion about theology and at last the person accused the doctor of acquired irreverence towards God, by refusing to look "upwards" towards the light. The doctor is made to retort that as the person is constantly rolling his eyes upwards, he had developed the nictitating membrane, called the third eye-lid, so common in fowls, which tended to shut out "not all the light," but "all the light" that person did not want. "It is a funny old action that too much light is hurtful to weak eyes, and in the same relation too much work is hurtful to weakened minds and intellects and it is such a sorry pretense to spend their time in prayer, hoping to gain something for nothing, to acquire valuable rights without exertion. Thus it is that the Christian world hope to reach the gates of the New Jerusalem and enter in, by merely reciting the Lord's prayer, instead of deserving to go there by good actions.

The opening of the prayer is an address, a direction, indicating that it is intended for a certain being, namely, "Our Father who art in heaven."

None ever stop long enough to consider, or even give the matter any thought, whether or not the petition is ever delivered to the being to whom it is addressed. The destination is somewhat vague. It is said that some time ago a religious critic in Germany sent a postal card through the mails simply addressed to "God in Heaven," and the card was returned to the writer officially stamped "insufficiently addressed." It was only too true.

The combined wisdom of all the governments of earth has not been able to determine the location of Heaven and none know what it would be like, when they do find it. But why designate that being as "Our Father?" What has he done for mankind that would warrant such a title? Does he give or bestow upon one child of the race its "daily bread" without heartfelt labor? There may be something in the argument that God helps those who help themselves, but it is noted that the self-help must come first and when the object of the labor has been accomplished, through self help, why thank God for it? If man did not help himself, would God take care of him? Has God taken care of him? True, indeed, the "Lord may provide," but man has not been able to the way to solve the problem of provision and production. We frequently hear somebody say, "God help him," and when the necessity arises for such a remark, it is a case of "Good-bye." Man does not need a "Father" in "Heaven." Fathers are needed on earth. They are wanted here. Not to the past, but to the future, man must look for the Saturnian age when the demons of need and greed will be exorcised and human love become the universal law. Man must look to the fathers of earth and cease dreaming about imaginary fathers in heaven. The former are capable of useful labor for the production of human happiness, but the latter are dependents upon man for their show of vain glory.

Not so very long ago a religiously inclined lady wrote the Blade, saying that the Free-thinkers were dreamers, and accused its editor of dreaming too much. It may be true, and probably is, but we love to dream. Life is a dream. It is mystic, wonderful, and we know not when we sleep nor when, where, or how we shall wake. We love to dream that this world will cease its vapors of things celestial and turn its attention to things terrestrial. One eternity waited for us to be born and another waits to see what we will do now we are here. Gazing upon the irate glory that seems to belt the world with beauty, the hope comes that in the years to be the theological storm clouds that o'er shadow the mind will melt and dissipate themselves. The Blade may not live to attain it neither may its present readers, but he who strives for it, though vanquished, is still a victor.

In the struggle Free-thought may be wounded grievously, yet, by heroic endeavor and united effort, her banner, torn, but flying, shall be able to wave over and above the grave of religious tyranny.

## THE BRIDEGROOM CAME, BUT —

The name of Miss Katherine Lang, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, deserves to be immortalized in poetry and prose. We have read the arguments of the marriage reformers, we have waded through the wilderness and whatness of the advocates of free love and its kindred subjects, but Miss Lang has delivered an argument that cannot be answered, and if the great world of Femininity would but follow the example, she has set, the divorce lawyer would have to take, in his shingle and go out of business, the divorce mills would cease to grind for lack of grist, and the shameful Benedicts of the day would simply have to take to the woods. Could

her example be followed the domestic peace of the world would be increased.

Numerous examples have been pointed to for the guidance of the race and many of the alleged saints whose names are enshrined in the various religions of the world, are made shining stars in humanity's heaven, but they all pale in the presence of Miss Lang. Her act was simple, yet strong; easy, yet of great force and power; commonplace, yet it shines with a lustre the ages cannot dim. She is great in a glory all her own. From the loins of such a woman come the noblest and best of the race. If it be true that Romans were built by a she-wolf actually become demi-gods, what might not Americans be when sprung from the loins of such a lioness!

According to the published accounts Miss Lang was engaged to be married. It was no mere dream of sensuality, of which the heaven of free love is built, but a truly practical affair. She was willing to comply with all the requirements of the law. She was wooed and won. Before giving utterance to that one word, which has made many a man lose his identity and demand an introduction upon meeting himself in the middle of the turnpike road, she wanted to know that she was going to be the wife of a real man, one worthy of the name. She made a condition that her intended husband should meet her at the altar with the sum of \$500 in the pockets of his carefully creased pantaloons. On the appointed day Miss Lang went to the church to meet with her liege lord and the \$500. The intended bridegroom put in his appearance but he failed to produce the cash. Miss Lang thereupon flatly told him in the presence of the assembled guests that she would not marry him and would have nothing more to do with him. Now let us quote:

"When he asked me to marry him," she explained, "I told him that he must first show me that he was able to support a wife by going to work, and that he must further show that he was frugal by saving \$500, which he must produce at the altar. Recently he announced to me that he had saved that much and I agreed that the day of the wedding should be set. Through mutual friends, I learned that he had been working but little in the past year and that he was deceiving me about the amount of money he had saved. I did not want the money, I simply wanted him to show me that he was a man."

Right here the Blade wishes to extend its congratulations to Miss Lang and to the man who is finally able to prove that he is worthy of her. She was not mercenary. It was her right to know for sure, that she was the wife of a genuine man when the final words were spoken. She recognized the fact that a real man neither hides away his time or lies about the condition of his bank account. If all American women were so exacting the divorce courts would stand idle, their dockets empty, and this would be a saving of money, shame and disgrace. Woman should, at all times be just as determined that she is not linking her domestic fortunes with a male person who is unable to provide for her and her children. Here is marriage reform with a vengeance and the free love advocates are deprived of a very powerful weapon in their argument.

One of the principal troubles with the average young woman is that once she "falls in love" she imagines that the whole she-world looks upon the object of her affections with the eyes she is using and meditating upon how good and how nice he is. Such a thing as failure upon his part seems impossible to her. A few weeks later when it begins to dawn upon her mind that he has not sufficient ability to replenish the larder, it is too late. If she is meek she accepts her fate uncomplainingly, but if she is possessed of spirit, and above all the courage, she consults a lawyer.

Were there more women like Miss Lang the lynch-pin in the logic of those who rail at the institution of marriage would slip out and get lost.

## MUSIC AN INDEX TO CIVILIZATION

Show us the music of a people, or a race, and we will point out to you their particular standard of civilization. The more crude the music, the more barbarian the people. It is a long step from the tom-tom and the tinkling plates of the savage to a modern orchestra, yet the former are at the bottom of the scale and the latter at the top, while between them are the various gradations of instrumentation from which people derive the music that is most pleasing to them, the only music they know of.

What man can find language that is sufficiently expressive to describe the effect that music has upon the human mind? He who cannot fully appreciate good music is out of harmony with the spheres. Music is a kind of unfathomable speech, which enriches, enlivens and uplifts. If there is such a thing as ever getting toward the edge of infinitude, music will help to take us there. Was it not the immortal Bard of Avon who said:

"The man that has no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils."

and he spoke with a truth. It is a recreation to mind and body. It may come in martial airs, or sweet, soothing melody, but it touches all, inspires all, and the human heart makes a ready reply.

If the premises here laid down are true we can at once perceive that the orthodox heaven is built upon a plan of simple and barbaric splendor. The playing upon harps and the tooting of horns, combined with a big, eternal chorus of hallelujahs, is the only music mentioned as existing in heaven. Add to this a pair of No. ten wings and a crown, another evidence of barbaric thought, and you have the makeup complete. No wonder there is neither marriage or giving in marriage in heaven. Through it all the orthodox church appropriates the science of music, claims its development as her own and declares in triumph that it is all from god and of



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